

DR PHILIP NITSCHKE & DR FIONA STEWART

THE PEACEFUL PILL **e**HANDBOOK



Exit International USA

**DIGITAL ONLINE
EDITION**

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About The Peaceful Pill Handbook Series

The Peaceful Pill Handbook information book series is published to provide research and information on euthanasia and assisted suicide for the elderly, those who are seriously ill (for example with cancer or ALS) & their family/ friends.

The online edition is updated up to 6 times each year, ensuring that readers have access to the most up-to-date important information on euthanasia and assisted suicide developments globally.

The print edition of *The Peaceful Pill Handbook* on euthanasia and assisted suicide was first published in 2006. The online *Peaceful Pill eHandbook* (subscription) was first published in 2008.

For more information about *The Peaceful Pill Handbook* series,
please visit:

<http://www.peacefulpill.com>
or email: *sales@peacefulpill.com*

Phone:
+31 (0)6 57 838 228 (NL)
+1 360 961 1333 (USA)

Media inquiries: +31 (0) 630 966 992

<p>Content Revised: 8 October 2018</p>

For

Derek Humphry

for his courage and compassion in showing the way

‘Freedom takes a lot of effort’

Anna Stepanovna Politkovskaya

***The
Peaceful Pill
eHandbook***

**Dr Philip Nitschke
&
Dr Fiona Stewart**

EXIT INTERNATIONAL

Published by Exit International USA
8105 Birch Bay Square St, Ste 205
Blaine WA 98230

sales@peacefulpill.com
+31 (0)6 30 966 992 (NL)
(+1) 360 961 1333 (USA)

THE PEACEFUL PILL EHANDBOOK, 2017
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First published by Exit International USA, 2006
Cover design by Matteo Holzkecht
Cover artwork by Michelle Flowers

The Peaceful Pill eHandbook
First published by Exit International US Ltd, 2008
Technology supplied by www.Yudu.com

Nitschke, Philip Haig
Stewart, Fiona Joy
The peaceful pill handbook.

ISBN 978-0-9788788-4-9
www.peacefulpill.com

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The Peaceful Pill Forums

Members of Exit & Subscribers to the Peaceful Pill eHandbook have free access, on approval,* to the Peaceful Pill online forums.**

<http://www.peacefulpillforums.com>

To apply for membership of the Forums, you will first need to be aged 50 years or over and of sound mind. To apply, send an email to:

forums@exitinternational.net

* Photo ID is required.

** A wait time of 1 month applies to new subscribers.

Preface

The Peaceful Pill eHandbook has been created at a time when there are very few places where Seniors and those who are seriously ill can get information about their end-of-life choices.

In 1996, Australia passed the world's first right to die law; the *Rights of the Terminally Ill Act (ROTI)*. Under *ROTI*, four of my seriously ill patients self-administered a legal, lethal overdose of drugs; a Peaceful Pill if you like. All died peacefully in their sleep, surrounded by people they loved.

I know this, because back then I was their treating physician. I was the one who put the needle into their veins. And I was the one who built the 'Deliverance Machine' that they used to die. The Deliverance Machine was a laptop computer and program that gave these individuals the ultimate control over their deaths. Their deaths taught me much, but mostly how important it is for people to be allowed to have control at the end.

On each separate occasion, the computer presented a short series of questions:

1. Are you aware that if you go ahead to the last screen and press the 'yes' button you will be given a lethal dose of medications and die?
2. Are you certain you understand that if you proceed and press the 'yes' button on the next screen you will die?
3. In 15 seconds you will be given a lethal injection ... press 'yes' to proceed.

Preface



The Deliverance Machine can be seen at the British Science Museum, London

The Peaceful Pill Handbook

After pressing the button for a third time, the Machine would deliver a lethal dose of the barbiturate, Nembutal. The Deliverance Machine enabled these four people to die peacefully and with dignity under a new law.

My experience in those days of legal, assisted suicide taught me that the drug sodium pentobarbital - commonly known as Nembutal - provides one of the most peaceful death imaginable. And it almost never fails. That is why it is used in countries like the Netherlands, Belgium and Switzerland and the US States of Oregon, Washington, Vermont, California and Colorado where assisted suicide is lawful.

In western countries where there are no end-of-life laws, the means of achieving a peaceful death is next to impossible. The rationale governments is that if people are kept in a state of complete ignorance they will live longer, happier lives. Not true!

In our experience, once people have access to information that empowers and enables informed decisions to be made, they tend to stop worrying. Knowledge about one's end-of-life choices is empowering. It is this empowerment that promotes a longer, happier life. Not ignorance.

The Peaceful Pill eHandbook has been created to provide the most accurate, up-to-date information about end-of-life choices possible. The online medium has proven the perfect format for disseminating information in this fast-changing field.

The Peaceful Pill eHandbook is published in the US where freedom of speech is enshrined in the United States *Bill of Rights*. Of course, the *eHandbook* covers some grey areas of the law. It is the Constitutional protections offered by the First Amendment that allows these issues to be canvassed.

Preface

The Peaceful Pill eHandbook draws on more than a decade's scientific research and political advocacy in the fields of Assisted Suicide and Voluntary Euthanasia. Since its publication in October 2008, this *eHandbook* has become the leading Internet resource on end-of-life choices.

Acknowledgements

The *Peaceful Pill eHandbook* could not have been written without the support of many people. First to thank are the many Exit members, Exit forum users and PPeH subscribers who have contributed their expertise, ideas and travel stories. In addition, the books have benefitted from specific technical, legal, medical, film and language contributions from Matteo Holzknecht, Steve Hopes, Ted Ballou, Carlo Quaglia, Hans Van Amstel-Jonker, Rene Heijkoop, Casilda Fernandez and Guylene Briend Surel. We would also like to acknowledge the technical staff at Yudu in the UK for their ongoing work and support. And finally we thank our staff at Exit International for their tireless work, do day in and day out.

A Word of Caution

This book *is* intended for Seniors and people who are seriously ill (and their families). This book is *not* intended for young people or anyone suffering from psychiatric illness or depression. As authors we acknowledge that there is a small risk that this book may be misused by people for whom this information is clearly not appropriate.

The risk that information of this nature may be misused was a fact acknowledged by the ‘godfather’ of the right-to-die movement, former British journalist, Derek Humphry. When Derek first published *Final Exit* in 1991 he was criticised for endangering suicidal teens the world over. However, as he would later point out, the suicide statistics failed to show the much talked about ‘blip’. There has been no rise in the suicide rate. Providing people with information does not incite or encourage people to die. And this is a critical point.

Rather, reliable, accurate information empowers people to make informed decisions about their own end-of-life circumstances. Good information should not only prevent grim, horrible deaths of gunshot and hanging (the most common causes of suicide in the US, UK and Australia respectively) but it should allay fears. It is paradox, perhaps. By equipping Seniors and those who are seriously ill with knowledge that empowers and returns control, these same people are more likely to stop worrying and get on with living. Anecdotal evidence to this effect can be seen at each and every Exit meeting. Fears are addressed and participants feel back in control.

Preface

As authors, we ask that users of this eBook respect its integrity and intended audience. Seniors, the elderly and people who are seriously ill deserve to be able to make informed decisions about their futures. Ignorance is not an acceptable state of affairs.

It is a basic human right to live and die with one's dignity intact. *The Peaceful Pill eHandbook* is one way of helping ensure that one's passing might be as proud and strong as one's living.

If you feel you need counselling, please contact the following organisations:

USA:	Suicide Prevention Hotline - 1 800 273 8255
UK	The Samaritans on - 08457 90 90 90
Australia	Lifeline on - 13 11 14
New Zealand	Lifeline on - 0508 828 865
Canada	The Life Line on - 1-800-668-6868

Other countries hotlines can be found at:

<http://www.suicide.org/international-suicide-hotlines.html>

The Peaceful Pill eHandbook

Tips for Use

Navigation

The Peaceful Pill eHandbook breaks new ground in online publishing. Part-book & part-video, the Yudu technology platform of the *Peaceful Pill eHandbook* allows users to Turn the Page with a swoosh or by the arrows at either side of the page.

Notepad

A notepad function is located in top menu bar, allowing users can make notes as you go. The notes are stored as yellow page icons at various places in the text.

Bookmarks

A bookmark feature can also be found in the top menu bar. This allows pages to be marked for future reference.

Index

The traditional Index has been replaced by a search box function in the top menu bar. This does away with the need for page numbers. When page numbers are quoted, they refer to the page counter at the center top of the digital display.

Magnification

If your eyesight is failing, you can click on the *eHandbook's* built-in magnifying glass that allows the user to zoom and reposition text on the screen with amazing customability. Or use your mouse or touchpad for the same effect.

Multimedia

Because this is an online *eBook*, by its nature users can enjoy a full multi-media experience via hyperlinks and videos.

Preface

Access for all Devices

The eHandbook can be accessed across all platforms, including PCs and Mac, laptops as well as Android tablets, iPads and iPhones. No special software is required.

Printing

The *eHandbook* can be printed page by page or as groups of pages using the Flash version.

As they now say in the world of online books -
READ IT, WATCH IT!

Cashback Offer

Purchasers of the print edition *Peaceful Pill Handbook* are entitled to a \$10 cashback should they elect to upgrade to a subscription to the online *Peaceful Pill eHandbook*.

Once a reader upgrades at www.peacefulpill.com, you are welcome to email Exit with proof of purchase and we will refund you \$10 by check.